

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Thomas Anderson on 02/26/2010.

2. The application has been amended as follows:

2.1. Claims 48-65 have been cancelled.

2.2. Replace claim 67 with

-- 67. (Currently Amended) A method comprising the steps of:

(1) providing a host database (~~260~~) in a host computer system comprising:

A. retaining data for a plurality of consumers (~~0011, 0068~~), comprising, for each consumer:

I. retaining the consumer's personal and demographic data (~~310, 320~~); and

II. obtaining consumer data from a source, comprising at least one of:

1. obtaining consumer data from the consumer voluntarily submitting data to the host computer system (~~0071~~);

2. obtaining consumer data from a manufacturer, wherein the manufacturer possesses a login account to the host computer system (~~202, 0020~~);

3. obtaining consumer data from a retailer, wherein the retailer possesses a login account to the host computer system (~~202, 0020~~); and

4. obtaining consumer data from a third-party entity (~~270, 0014, 0068~~) wherein the third-party entity may not have a login account to the host computer system, comprising at least one of:
 - a. obtaining consumer data regarding the consumer that cannot connect to a network;
 - b. obtaining consumer data regarding the consumer that does not have access to a computer;
 - c. obtaining consumer data regarding the consumer that has no direct relationship with the host computer system; and
 - d. obtaining consumer data regarding the consumer that has no itinerary or destination;
- B. retaining data for a plurality of manufacturers (~~0049~~), wherein each manufacturer has a login account to the host computer system (~~202, 0020~~), wherein each manufacturer is a business that manufactures or packages tangible products intended for consumers, wherein each manufacturer produces and delivers products to a retailer that possesses an inventory of the manufacturer's products, wherein the manufacturer's products may be obtained by a consumer by purchasing the product from a retailer, and the purchase comprises the consumer receiving unencumbered ownership of the product from the retailer in exchange for the retailer's receipt of the consumer's currency or equity representing currency; and
- C. retaining data for a plurality of retailers (~~0049~~), wherein each retailer has a login account to the host computer system (~~202, 0020~~), wherein each retailer comprises at least one of:
 - I. a business that possesses an inventory of products from a variety of manufacturers, wherein the sale of a manufacturer's product comprises

the retailer providing a consumer with unencumbered ownership of the manufacturer's product in exchange for the retailer's receipt of a consumer's currency or equity representing currency;

II. a business that provides a service for a consumer in exchange for the retailer's receipt of a consumer's currency or equity representing currency;

III. a business that provides temporary possession of the retailer's property to a consumer in exchange for the retailer's receipt of a consumer's currency or equity representing currency;

(2) providing a host website, comprising:

A. presenting interactive data entry forms ~~(203)~~ for the manufacturer ~~(202)~~, wherein the manufacturer interactive data entry forms are configured to receive input from the manufacturer and subsequently save manufacturer's data into the host database, comprising:

I. presenting manufacturer data entry forms for the manufacturer to enter data related to business operations and products of the manufacturer ~~(200, 210)~~;

II. presenting manufacturer data entry forms for the manufacturer to enter promotional data ~~(208)~~, wherein data submitted by the manufacturer is implemented by the host computer system to generate ~~(244)~~ and distribute ~~(242)~~ coupons and other promotional materials of the manufacturer; and

III. presenting manufacturer data entry forms for the manufacturer to select criteria representing a manufacturer's targeted consumer profile ~~(207, 211)~~, wherein the manufacturer's interaction with these forms is independent of interaction by a targeted consumer; and

- B. presenting interactive data entry forms (203) for the retailer (202), wherein the retailer interactive data entry forms are configured to receive input from the retailer and subsequently save retailer's data into the host database, comprising:
 - I. presenting retailer data entry forms for the retailer to enter data related to the business operations, inventory, and services of the retailer (203, 209, 240);
 - II. presenting retailer data entry forms for the retailer to enter promotional data (208), wherein data submitted by the retailer is implemented by the host computer system to generate (244) and distribute (242) the coupons and other promotional materials of the retailer; and
 - III. presenting retailer data entry forms to allow the retailer to select criteria representing a retailer's targeted consumer profile (207, 214), wherein the retailer's interaction with these forms is independent of interaction by a targeted consumer; and
- C. presenting interactive data entry forms and links for the consumer, wherein the consumer interactive data entry forms and links are configured to receive and subsequently save consumer's data into the host database, wherein the forms display promotional materials from the manufacturers and retailers which may be selected by the consumer (228, 0070), wherein selections of the displayed promotional materials by the consumer are saved by the host database (229), wherein the saved selections (232) will cause the host computer system to generate (244) and distribute (242) selected promotional materials to the consumer, wherein:
 - I. the manufacturer's promotional materials may be distributed independent of a manufacturer's preferred consumer profile;

- II. the retailer's promotional materials may be distributed independent of a retailer's preferred consumer profile; and
 - III. the selected promotional materials may be distributed independent of a consumer's profile;
- (3) providing a process to convert data from the host database into promotional materials ~~(240, 244)~~, comprising:
- A. performing queries to the host database, solely by the host computer system, for each consumer in the host database, comprising:
 - I. obtaining results of queries for the consumer, comprising the steps of:
 - 1. obtaining results, based upon the plurality of manufacturers ~~(244)~~, wherein one or more manufacturers create one or more targeted consumer profiles ~~(207)~~, wherein the consumer is targeted to be a recipient of one or more manufacturer's promotional materials, wherein the consumer is targeted independent of interaction by the targeted consumer;
 - 2. obtaining results, based upon the plurality of retailers ~~(244)~~, wherein one or more retailers create one or more targeted consumer profiles ~~(207)~~, wherein the consumer is targeted to be the recipient of one or more retailer's promotional materials, wherein the consumer is targeted independent of interaction by the targeted consumer; and
 - 3. obtaining results from the queries in the form of one or more records in the host database identifying manufacturer and retailer promotional materials selected by the consumer ~~(229)~~, wherein selected manufacturer's promotional materials may be independent of the manufacturer's preferred consumer profile,

wherein selected retailer's promotional materials may be independent of the retailer's preferred consumer profile, wherein selected promotional materials may be independent of a consumer's profile;

II. sorting the results of the queries for the consumer, wherein duplicate instances of promotional materials are eliminated (~~0040, 0067, 0069~~),

III. obtaining, from the host database, all promotional material data required to generate the promotional materials (~~240, 0073~~) for the consumer;

(4) generating promotional materials (~~244, 0069, 0086~~) by the host computer system for the consumer on behalf of one or more manufacturer and retailer, comprising at least one of:

A. generating promotional materials with a host printer, wherein printing promotional materials includes printing consumer identification codes data that may include serial numbers (~~0084~~), wherein the printed promotional materials are subsequently distributed (~~242~~) to the consumer via mail or other means;

B. generating promotional materials and then subsequently distributing (~~242~~) via email, email attachment, webpage, fax or other electronic means, wherein each promotional material includes consumer identification codes data that may include serial numbers (~~0084~~); and

(5) providing a tracking process (~~original claims 4/11/17/19; paragraphs 0040, 0069~~), performed after the consumer redeems the promotional materials generated by the host computer system, comprising:

A. performing manufacturer coupon tracking on behalf of the manufacturer, wherein the host computer system generates and subsequently distributes a manufacturer's coupon to the consumer, and the manufacturer's coupon subsequently provides value to the consumer when the consumer redeems the coupon at a manufacturer coupon redeemer, wherein the consumer transfers

possession of the manufacturer's coupon to the manufacturer coupon redeemer in exchange for said value, wherein the manufacturer coupon redeemer seeks reimbursement from the manufacturer for the value provided to the consumer, wherein the manufacturer coupon tracking comprises:

- I. submitting consumer identification codes data (0084), contained within the manufacturer's coupon, to the host computer system;
- II. comparing, by the host computer system, the submitted consumer identification codes data to data implemented by the host computer system to generate the manufacturer's coupon (290); and
- III. saving comparison data in the host database (290) to minimize consumer receipt of duplicate coupons (0040), minimize coupon fraud, and assess individual purchasing habits, redemption rates, and effectiveness one or more targeted consumer profiles (0042, 0084);
- IV. wherein the manufacturer coupon redeemer is a retailer that, within its business practice, redeems host-generated manufacturer's coupons presented by the consumer, and the consumer uses the manufacturer's coupon (0005) for the purpose of obtaining the value stated on the coupon; wherein the manufacturer coupon redeemer's redemption of the manufacturer's coupon is independent of the host computer system; wherein the manufacturer coupon redeemer is not required to possess a login account with the host computer system; wherein the consumer may redeem the manufacturer's coupon at a manufacturer coupon redeemer chosen by the consumer; wherein the consumer may interact directly with the manufacturer coupon redeemer; wherein the manufacturer coupon redeemer is a retailer that possesses an inventory of products from a variety of manufacturers; wherein the manufacturer coupon redeemer's

primary business is selling manufacturers' products to consumers; wherein the manufacturer coupon redeemer has an inventory of the product stated on the manufacturer's coupon; wherein the consumer presents, at the manufacturer coupon redeemer, a product associated with the manufacturer's coupon along with the manufacturer's coupon; wherein the manufacturer coupon redeemer transfers its possession of the product to the consumer in exchange for the consumer's currency or equity representing currency, and the transfer of possession of the product to the consumer constitutes the consumer's ownership and the term of ownership is then determined solely by the consumer; and

B. performing retailer coupon tracking on behalf of the retailer, wherein the host computer system generates and subsequently distributes a retailer's coupon to the consumer, and the retailer's coupon subsequently provides value to the consumer by redeeming the retailer's coupon at a location operated by the retailer, wherein the consumer transfers possession of the retailer's coupon to the retailer in exchange for the value provided to the consumer, wherein the retailer coupon tracking comprises:

- I. submitting consumer identification codes data (0084), contained within the retailer's coupon, to the host computer system;
- II. comparing, by the host computer system, the submitted consumer identification codes data to data implemented by the host computer system to generate the retailer's coupon (290); and
- III. saving comparison data in the host database (290) to minimize consumer receipt of duplicate coupons (0010), minimize coupon fraud, and assess individual purchasing habits, redemption rates, and effectiveness of one or more targeted consumer profiles (0012, 0084). --

STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The instant claims meet the 101 requirements based on the customized coupon distribution limitations and the redemption tracking features.

The most pertinent prior art known to the Examiner is listed on the attached forms PTO-892 and 1449. As shown by Postrel, Barnett et al., Katz et al., the GMA release, the Ewoldt article, the close prior arts of record, a method of distributing customized/permalized coupons are well-known. However, none of the prior art of record including Postrel, Barnett et al., Katz et al., the GMA release, the Ewoldt article provides sufficient suggestion or motivation to arrive at a method with features of the specific querying of the customer, retailer and manufacture databases for information, pooling the information, providing a customized manufacture coupons based on the information acquired, distributing the coupons via electronic or physical processes and tracking the redeemed coupons based on the specific infrastructures as required in the present claims. Accordingly, the claimed invention, as a whole, would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the business marketing art. None of the prior art of record teaches, discloses or suggests a method with the specific querying, distributing and tracking steps in the manner as those recited the present claims.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tri V. Nguyen whose telephone number is (571) 272-6965. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eric Stamber can be reached on 571-272-6724 and Vasu Jagannathan can be reached on (571) 272-1119. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/T. V. N./
Examiner, Art Unit 1796
March 5, 2010

/Eric W. Stamber/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3622